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England and Liberia

ENGLAND AND LIBERIA.

1884

Note.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Colonization Society, held at the Colonization Building, Washington, D. C., May 11, 1883, Rev. Thomas G. Addison, D. D., Rev. Byron Sunderland, D. D., and the Secretary of the Society were appointed a Committee to prepare a statement of the facts, from the beginning to the present time, of the long pending controversy between the Governments of England and Liberia touching the Northwestern territory of the Republic of Liberia.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held June 8, 1883, the Committee charged with its preparation presented and read the accompanying statement : which, at a meeting of the Executive Committee held February 1, 1884, was ordered to be printed for private circulation.

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ENGLAND AND LIBERIA.

Africa has been regarded, until the present generation, as an unimportant continent. Along its wonderful extent of coast line but few stations, towns, or colonies were found, and no thought, until in recent years, of communication with the vast unreached interior was entertained. Now, the attention of all Europe is fixed upon it to develop trade, advance science, introduce civilization, and plant Christianity.

Portugal, in her ancient claim of right of discovery, holds the Congo and Angola districts, and proposes to annex Loango and control the outlet of the Congo river. The French tri-color has been raised at Algiers and Madagascar, on the Senegal and Gaboon, and in other places. England possesses the Cape of Good Hope, and seems thoroughly committed to the policy of extending her already largely acquired territory along the West Coast. Of a movement of the British Government in this same direction it is now proposed to treat historically.

ORIGIN OF LIBERIA.

The American Colonization Society was founded in Washington, D. C., December 21, 1816. A Constitution was adopted December 28, and officers elected January 1, 1817. The Society has strictly confined its labors as declared in Article Second—"to aid the colonization of Africa by voluntary colored emigrants from the United States, and to promote there the extension of Christianity and civilization." The first colonists left New York February 6, 1820; but it was not until December 15, 1821, that a treaty was signed with the native proprietors at and for the purchase

of Cape Mesurado, now the city of Monrovia. These "pioneers" were removed there from Sherbro Island—their temporary place of residence—and the American flag raised April 25, 1822.

Tracts of land, mostly on the Coast, were bought from time to time from the kings and chiefs of the country, and emigrants from the United States were settled upon them by the Society. These settlements or colonies, with one exception, were formed into a Commonwealth, the Legislature of which began its first session August 30, 1839. The people, in convention assembled, July 26, 1847, constituted and declared themselves "a free, sovereign, and independent State, by the name and title of the Republic of Liberia."

From this time forth Liberia ceased to be under the control of the American Colonization Society, and Liberia has since solely managed all her affairs, foreign and domestic.

THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS TO BUY TERRITORY.

The American Colonization Society ceded all its lands in Africa to Liberia, July 28, 1848, subject to the following provisions, viz.: (1) "The Government of Liberia shall allow to emigrants the quantity of land heretofore allowed them by existing regulations, out of any unoccupied or unsold lands; and when the Government sells any of the public lands, every alternate lot, or farm, or section, or square mile or miles, shall be left unsold, to be assigned to emigrants. (2) The Government of Liberia shall appropriate at least ten per cent. of the proceeds of the sale of public lands to school or educational purposes."

The Society, with a view to suppress the slave trade and secure an unbroken and respectable line of sea frontage, (say from the San Pedro river on the Southeast to the Shebar river on the Northwest, a distance of some six hundred miles,) with good natural boundaries, the Society raised upwards of thirty thousand dollars for the

purchase of a few intervening strips of the coast and to especially extend the line beyond Cape Mount, the then boundary on the Northwest. Of this amount, fifteen persons generously contributed each one thousand dollars, namely: Messrs. James Boorman, Charles Brewer, Herman Camp, R. L. Colt, Stephen Duncan, Alvarez Fisk, Francis Griffin, David Hunt, James Lenox, John Murdock, Auson G. Phelps, James Railey, Solomon Sturges, Miss Waldo, and Daniel Waldo. Charles McMicken gave five thousand dollars toward acquiring Gallinas, a notorious slave shipping port. This fund was promptly forwarded to the authorities of Liberia. Additional gifts for the same purpose were sent them other than through the Society, among which was one thousand dollars by John Beveridge, of New York. Samuel Gurney, of London, subscribed one thousand guineas to President Roberts, conditional upon its being applied to the acquisition of Gallinas. The desire and efforts to raise the money to buy the territory just named were made public through the press. Everything was done openly and with the approval, so far as known, of all parties in this country and in Europe, and with the favor of the Governments of the world.

THE NORTHWEST COAST LINE PURCHASED.

President Roberts frequently reported to the American Colonization Society his movements and success in this behalf. Under date of Monrovia, May 17, 1850, he wrote:

"I have just returned from the Windward coast and send a hasty note to say that we have at length succeeded in securing the famed territory of Gallinas to this Government, including all the *territories between Cape Mount and Shebar*, excepting a small slip of about five miles of coast in the Killom country, which will soon fall into our hands. Had I not deemed it absolutely important to secure the Gallinas to prevent the revival of the slave trade there, I would not have paid the price demanded. The purchase of Gallinas and the neighboring tracts cost us

about nine thousand five hundred dollars. The Chiefs were aware of the object of the purchase and argued strenuously the sacrifice, as they consider it, they must make in abandoning forever the slave trade, and demanded a large sum as an equivalent."

ENGLAND'S GIFTS AND COMPLAINTS.

The British Government was not only the first to acknowledge the nationality of the Republic of Liberia and to enter into treaty relations with her, but it encouraged and strengthened the new African State by presenting her with the armed schooner Lark, followed by the gift of the schooner Quail as a nucleus for the Liberian Navy. But England's policy changed and, in 1860, she began to call in question Liberia's possession, dominion, and sovereignty in and over the Manmah, Solymah and Gallinas territories, purchased with funds raised, as already stated, for that special purpose. This denial proceeded not because England claimed that region for herself or for the Colony of Sierra Leone; and it so weakened the prestige and revenue of Liberia, that various attempts have been made on her part to bring about a recognition of her rights in the matter.

PRESIDENT BENSON.

The first of these efforts at settlement was made by President Benson, at London, in the summer of 1862, during repeated conferences with the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, resulting, as stated in President Benson's succeeding Annual Message, in—

"Her Majesty's Government having magnanimously acknowledged the just claims of the Government of Liberia to the territory comprehended between the San Pedro river on the Southeast, to the river Shebar on the Northwest, with the understanding, however, that the Northwest boundary cannot be definitely described and laid down until a survey of the river Jong, and ascertainment shall have been thereby made whether its course and extent interiorward

are sufficient to give us a Northwestern boundary of some sixty miles interiorward, otherwise a line, as you will see delineated on the map which accompanied the dispatch of July 5th, from the Foreign Office, is to run due North from its head to complete the sixty miles."

The next Annual Message of President Benson, December, 1863, contains the following:

"I regret to have to state that our Northwest boundary has not been definitely settled with Her Majesty's Government. This fact, I am sure, was as little expected and is as much regretted by you as by me.

"I transmitted to the Legislature, at the last session, the correspondence I had with Her Majesty's Government during my visit to Europe last year, which fully confirmed all I stated in my message in regard to the same.

"The conclusion arrived at by the correspondence was simply, as I understand, that on my return home a joint Commission was to have been appointed for the purpose of ascertaining the course and extent of the river Jong, with a view of ascertaining if its extent was sufficient (60 miles) to form our Northwest boundary; if not, that a line should be run from its terminus due North, so as to complete the sixty miles. In a few months after my return home, I received a dispatch from Her Majesty's Government, through our Consul General in London, to the effect that they had learned from the authorities at Sierra Leone since I left that the natives occupying territory we claim to the Northwest, deny our claim, and consequently we have no right to exercise political jurisdiction; and that in the opinion of the authorities at Sierra Leone, for the Government of Liberia to employ the requisite means (by force) to compel them to keep faith with us in their most solemn stipulations and obligations of allegiance, would too injuriously affect the commercial interests of British trade in that section of country, to be regarded favorably by Her Majesty's Government.

"The British Commissioners arrived in April. I appointed the Hons. J. J. Roberts and J. N. Lewis on the part of the Republic of Liberia. The instructions of the British Commissioners, and consequently their proposals, were so

dissimilar to the understanding I had had in England with Her Majesty's Government, and so contrary to what Liberians can possibly voluntarily accede to, that the entire matter remains to-day in *status quo*."

PRESIDENT ROYE.

President Roye, in his Annual Message, December, 1870, mentions having had two interviews, at London, during the preceding summer with Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, touching Liberia's relations with Great Britain, and that since his (President Roye's) return home "a very lengthy dispatch has been received from Earl Granville, in which all our matters of difference are reviewed in an amicable manner; and his Lordship suggests that two Commissioners be appointed on the part of Great Britain and two on the part of Liberia, in co-operation with one from the United States to act as umpire, to investigate the validity of our title to the Northwestern territory claimed by the Republic, and that the decision arrived at by the said Commissioners shall be final."

PRESIDENT ROBERTS.

In his Annual Message, December, 1873, President Roberts reports his visit to England during the previous year, and says:

"I was received most courteously by Earl Granville, Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and discussed with his Lordship fully and freely the several international subjects with which I had been charged. With me the immediate settlement of the question relating to our Northwest boundary formed the first and most important consideration; and this I urged upon every ground of principle and justice that occurred to me. But while I have reason to believe that Earl Granville was favorably impressed by the arguments advanced in favor of an immediate settlement of the question, his Lordship informed me that Her Majesty's Government felt themselves precluded from departing from the arrangement

come to in 1870 for settling the Liberian Boundary Question'; and that 'having again attentively considered the question, Her Majesty's Government would not feel themselves justified in acquiescing in the territorial claims put forward by Liberia without a preliminary inquiry into the subject on the coast.'

"This Government has steadily resisted the idea of allowing the testimony of the native chiefs to be admitted as evidence against the validity of title deeds which they themselves or their predecessors had solemnly executed. And had not this course of admitting the testimony of the Chiefs been insisted upon by the British Commissioners at the Joint Commission which met in 1863, for the purpose of terminating this difficulty, the whole question would doubtless have been satisfactorily arranged at that time."

REV. DR. BLYDEN.

Rev. Edward W. Blyden, D.D., arrived at London, August, 1877, commissioned as special Minister Plenipotentiary by the Government of Liberia, to adjust finally the Northwest territorial boundary of the Republic, and the correspondence on the subject is said to have been more extensive than any that preceded it. The result was that Earl Derby, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated that he felt obliged to adhere to the proposals already communicated to the Liberian authorities by the English Government, and that he would take immediate steps for their execution.

ENGLAND'S PROPOSALS.

The following are the proposals formulated by England in 1870:

"First. That the British Government, while agreeing to recognize the actual limits of the Republic as comprising the coast line between Cape Palmas to the South and the South bank of the river Sugaree to the Northwest, cannot admit, without further inquiry, the claims advanced by Liberia to the line of coast Northward of this boundary, lying between the Sugaree and Shebar rivers.

Second. As some of the Native Chiefs within these limits have denied the alleged cession of their territories to Liberia, and repudiate her claims to them, the British Government propose that a Joint Commission, consisting of two British and two Liberian Commissioners, shall be appointed to investigate on the spot the disputed claims of Liberia, and to define the boundary limits.

Third. The Commissioners shall be fully empowered to inquire into the validity of the title deeds that the Liberian Commissioners may produce in support of their claims, and entertain all and every evidence to the contrary that the Native Chiefs or other claimants may desire to submit to them.

Fourth. The decision of the Commissioners to be considered as final and absolute, and, in the event of any disagreement between them, the points in dispute shall be left to the arbitration of the United States, who shall, if necessary, be invited to send out an officer to the Commission.

Fifth. The Commissioners are to limit their inquiry strictly to the question of the boundary, and are not to entertain any other subject of discussion."

COMMODORE SHUFELDT APPOINTED UMPIRE.

It will be observed that the British Government, while making no claim to the disputed territory, assumes a protectorate over the Native Kings and Chiefs, and on their mere denial of their deeds of cession requires the Liberians to exhibit and maintain their titles. The Liberians, however, had no alternative. Too weak to assert their rights by force, they assented to the foregoing proposals, not by an express but a tacit acquiescence.

The arbitration provided for in the fourth article was formally accepted by the United States Government, which thereby became a disinterested party to the compact, and the invitation to send out an officer to the Commission was responded to by appointing Commodore R. W. Shufeldt, U. S. N.

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.

The Mixed Commission, as originated and prescribed by England, organized at Sierra Leone February 13, 1879, and then adjourned to meet at Solymah April 1, the British Commissioners requesting the delay to obtain additional instructions from their Government. These were Hon. David Hopkins, Consul at Fernando Po, and Hon. W. W. Streeten, Chief Justice of Sierra Leone. The Liberia Commissioners were Hon. J. W. Worrell, Senator from Grand Bassa County, and Hon. William M. Davis, Ex-Attorney General of the Republic.

Commodore Shufeldt arrived at Sierra Leone, January 15, in the U. S. S. "Ticonderoga," which left Norfolk, Va., December 7, 1878, and remained on the coast, part of the time off Solymah, until the Commission adjourned, the British Commissioners, however, refusing to allow the Arbitrator to preside at the sessions of the Commission.

THE BRITISH COMMISSIONERS REFUSE TO SUBMIT.

The proceedings of the Commission are thus succinctly presented in a communication dated Monrovia, May 2, 1879, by Mr. Davis, one of the Commissioners, and a man deservedly held in high esteem for ability, integrity, and honor:

"I returned last week from Solymah, a place about fifteen miles north of Cape Mount, where the Mixed Commission on the Liberia Northwest Boundary Question met according to its adjournment in February last, when at Sierra Leone. We began our labors on the 1st of April and continued for twenty-five days. There were six pieces of territory to which Liberia was required, by the British, to prove her right of sovereignty before they would acknowledge our claims, and the investigation began with the territories of Mannah Rock, Mannah, and Solymah.

"After some twenty days spent in examining witnesses as to the validity of our deeds, the right of the Chiefs, who signed our deeds, to convey, and as to the boundaries of

the said territories, the British Commissioners admitted the validity of our deeds, but said that they were satisfied, from the testimony, that there were no countries known to the natives of the names of Mannah Rock, Mannah, and Solymah, and they were also satisfied that the Chiefs, who had signed our deeds, had no right to cede these territories to the Liberians. The Liberian Commissioners contended that we had fully established the claim of Liberia to these territories, and had clearly defined the boundaries of each tract of territory, and showed, by copies of treaties for the suppression of the slave trade, and for legitimate trade, made by Her Majesty's Government with the same Chiefs who signed our deeds, which treaties were made just about a year before our deeds of cession, that those Chiefs were, at that time, the rulers of those countries; and we also showed by oral testimony that the cession was made with the knowledge and consent of all the Chiefs and Headmen of those territories; and we contended, as there was a disputed question between the British and Liberian Commissioners as to whether or not the claim of Liberia to the territories had been sustained and proved, that question must be left to the decision of Commodore Shufeldt, the American Arbitrator.

The British Commissioners refused to submit any question to the arbitrator, but said they were willing to ask his opinion on the matter, with the reservation that Her Majesty's Government should not be bound by that opinion, unless it chose to be bound. The Liberian Commissioners replied that they could not agree to that proposal, for it was contrary to the draft proposals of 1870, made between the British and Liberian Governments, on which this Mixed Commission was based, and was also contrary to the instructions given to the Liberian and British Commissioners, by which they are instructed to submit all disputed questions to the Arbitrator for his decision; and they also said that the proposal of the British Commissioners to ask the opinion of the Arbitrator, with such reservation, was an insult to the United States, and they, the Liberian Commissioners, would not consent to be a party to such an insult. They said that as the British Commissioners refused to submit anything to the Arbitrator, it was useless to continue the investigation, and they proposed that the Arbitrator be informed that the Mixed Commission had reached a stage

where they could proceed no further, and that he would be furnished with an authentic copy of the proceedings. The British Commissioners agreed to this, and so the Arbitrator was furnished with a complete record of the proceedings, signed by all the Commissioners—which I hope he will lay before his Government, that they may see with what courtesy the English have treated their Arbitrator, whom they have sent out here at a great expense, at the request of the British Government."

The Mixed Commission failed, notwithstanding the exalted character of the Government and the person of the Arbitrator, and the strict impartiality manifested in their conduct. The next attempt at settlement was by a British official at Monrovia, acting in the double capacity of Commissioner and Umpire, attended by a Naval force.

ENGLISH CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES.

There have long been two disputed claims of British subjects against the Liberian Government. One was that of Mr. John M. Harris, residing at Solymah, amounting to some £9,000 for losses alleged to have been sustained by him through the enforcement of the revenue laws of the Republic at various periods in the years 1860-1880; and the other was the claims of three Sierra Leone traders, amounting to £848 19s. 8d for damages alleged to have been caused by the destruction of their property in the Mannah country in 1871, during a war between Liberia and the natives of that region.

ARRIVAL OF FOUR BRITISH MEN-OF-WAR.

March 20, 1882, A. E. Havelock, Esq., Governor of Sierra Leone and British Consul to Liberia, arrived at Monrovia in the colonial steam yacht "Prince of Wales," preceded or accompanied by the British war vessels "Pioneer," "Briton," "Flirt," and "Algerine," and presenting his credentials from the Foreign Office, London, as

a commissioner to settle the Boundary Question and the Harris and Mannah country claims. The President of Liberia appointed Rev. Edward W. Blyden, D. D., and Hon. William M. Davis Commissioners on the part of the Government to meet him.

Before the Commission thus formed the claims above mentioned were introduced by Governor Havelock, and discussed on the 21st, 22d, 23d, and 24th of March. The Harris claim was unanimously rejected. About the other claim, however, there was a difference of opinion, the Liberian Commissioners denying its validity altogether.

Governor Havelock then demanded the cession of the Northwest territory of Liberia, the boundary of the Republic to be fixed at Cape Mount, in consideration of which he was empowered by his Government to cancel the Mannah country claim he had just presented; otherwise, he was to enforce its payment. This being strenuously objected to, he volunteered to recommend to his Government that the Mannah river be fixed as the boundary line, if the Liberian Government would immediately consent to it.

DRAFT CONVENTION BY GOVERNOR HAVELOCK.

The Liberian Commissioners referred these conditions, penned by Consul Havelock in the form of a "Draft Convention," to President Gardner and his Cabinet, by whom they were accepted, subject to the ratification of the Senate of Liberia, the President promising to call a meeting at an early day for their consideration.

THE SENATE REJECTS THE PROPOSITION.

The Senate met in special session April 10th, and on the 17th the members waited on the President, and, through Vice-President Russell, stated their unanimous opinion and advice, that the President "should not accept the proposition of her Majesty's Government fixing the Northwest Boundary of Liberia at the Mannah river or Cape Mount;

nor should he sign or cause to be signed any Convention or Treaty ceding or relinquishing any of the public domain of Liberia, under any pretence whatever."

THE DRAFT CONVENTION AGAIN REJECTED.

Dispatches were received by the Secretary of State of Liberia from Governor Havelock, June 15th and September 5th, demanding the immediate ratification of the "Draft Convention" prepared by him in March, but which was not signed by either contracting party.

At the annual session of the Legislature, which began December 4, 1882, the "Havelock Draft Convention" having been considered, it was—

"Resolved, That while the Senate is willing to yield such territories as arbitration may decide is not Liberia's, or even to agree to a fair and honorable compromise not in violation of the protocol of 1870, yet it decides that it would be unfaithful to its high trust to accept of terms that would sweep away every one of those territories and leave us strip of our rights and our territories, and the national treasury imperilled in consequence."

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND LIBERIA.

In the organization and work of the American Colonization Society, to which Liberia owes its origin and existence, many of the most illustrious of the public men of the United States have given the benefit of their wise counsels and powerful support. Among these, not to mention the living, may be named Messrs. Bushrod Washington, Madison, and Clay, Presidents of the Society, and Messrs. Harper, Marshall, Frelinghuysen, Webster, Douglas, Everett, and Lincoln.

President Monroe, by his enlightened and just interpretation and execution of the act of March 3, 1819, providing for the return to Africa of slaves illegally brought into this country or taken at sea by armed vessels of the United States, furnished the means by which the work of the So-

society was practically begun. The Navy Department, by his direction, chartered and outfitted the ship "Elizabeth," giving passage in her to an agent of the Government and also an agent of the Society, and to eighty-six colored emigrants from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York. These, the "Pilgrim Fathers" of Liberia, embarked at New York city, February 5, 1820, the U. S. ship Cyane sailing about the same time as convoy and to co-operate.

VALUABLE SERVICES OF THE NAVY.

Cape Mesurade, upon which has grown the City of Monrovia and capital of Liberia, was purchased from the native proprietors December 15, 1821, largely by the personal bravery and intrepidity of Lieutenant, afterwards Commodore, Robert F. Stockton, who was sent in the war ship "Alligator" to explore the West African coast and select territory for a colony. The "Shark," commanded by Lieutenant, latterly known as Commodore, Matthew C. Perry, and the "John Adams," "Potomac," and other national vessels followed, rendering valuable services in encouraging and protecting the colonists. And the Navy has since contributed with sword and pen to advance the interests of the Americo-Africans.

RECAPTURED AFRICANS.

The United States Government has made Liberia the receptacle or asylum for five thousand seven hundred and twenty-two recaptured Africans, as provided for in the Act of March 3, 1819, and who could not well have been cared for elsewhere.

OUR GOVERNMENT BOUND TO RENDER AID.

In the treaty of October 21, 1862, between the United States and Liberia, it is stipulated: "Article 8. The United States Government engages never to interfere, unless solicited by the Government of Liberia, in the affairs between

the aboriginal inhabitants and the Government of the Republic of Liberia, in the jurisdiction and territories of the Republic. Should any United States citizen suffer loss, in person or property, from violence by the aboriginal inhabitants, and the Government of the Republic of Liberia should not be able to bring the aggressors to justice, the United States Government engages, a requisition having first been made therefor by the Liberian Government, to lend such aid as may be required."

CORRESPONDENCE WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

Liberia was, from the first, in its possessions an independent Colony, acquired by "certain persons, citizens of the United States, desirous to establish themselves." In 1843, Liberia took upon herself the exercise of national rights, and, among them, the universally acknowledged commercial right of collecting port charges. The British Government protested against the right, and the kindly intervention of the United States Government was invoked. In the correspondence which followed, Mr. Fox, British Minister at Washington, wrote to the Secretary of State: "The Liberians show a disposition to enlarge very considerably the limits of their territory; assuming, to all appearances quite unjustifiably, the right of monopolizing the trade with native inhabitants along a considerable line of coast where the trade has hitherto been free; and thus ignorantly interfering with the commerce, interests, and pursuits of British subjects in that quarter."

Secretary Upshur replied:

"It is not perceived that any nation can have just reason to complain that this settlement does not confine itself to the limits of its original territory. Its very existence requires that it should extend those limits. Heretofore this has never been done by arms so far as I am informed, but always by fair purchase from the natives. In like manner their treaties with the native princes, whether of trade or

otherwise, ought to be respected. It is quite certain that their influence in civilizing and Christianizing Africa, in suppressing the slave trade, and in ameliorating the condition of African slaves, will be worth very little if they should be restrained at this time, in any one of these particulars. Full justice, it is hoped, may be done to England, without denying to Liberia powers so necessary to the safety, prosperity, and the utility of that settlement as a philanthropic establishment. They are themselves nearly powerless; they must rely, for the protection of their own rights, on the justice and sympathy of other Powers.

"It is due to Her Majesty's Government that I should inform you that this Government regards this interesting settlement as occupying a peculiar position and as possessing peculiar claims to the friendly consideration of all Christian Powers; that the Government will at all times be prepared to interpose its good offices to prevent any encroachment by the colony upon any just right of any nation, and that it would be very unwilling to see it despoiled of its territory, rightfully acquired, or improperly restrained in the exercise of its necessary rights and powers as an independent settlement."

RUMOR OF A FRENCH PROTECTORATE.

In 1879, on receiving information that there had been "offered to the Liberian Government the protection of that of France," the following dispatch was sent from the Department of State to the American Minister at Paris:

"When it is considered that this Government founded and fostered the nucleus of native representative government on the African shores, and that Liberia, so created, affords a field of emigration and enterprise for the lately emancipated Africans of this country, who have not been slow to avail themselves of the opportunity, it is believed that this Government must feel a peculiar interest in any apparent movement to divert the independent political life of Liberia for the aggrandizement of a great Continental Power which already has a foothold of actual trading possession on the neighboring coast.

"You are doubtless aware that the policy of the adjacent British settlement of Sierra Leone has of late years been

one of encroachment, if not of positive unfriendliness toward Liberia, and it may prove that the policy of France in this matter may be merely antagonistic to British encroachment, and designed rather to aid that feeble Republic to maintain its independent *status*, with development of trade with France and French possessions, than to merge Liberia in the outlying system of that country. If so, it is desirable at least that the United States should be cognizant of the true tendency of the movement. You are, therefore, instructed to make such judicious and confidential inquiries as shall, without communicating undue importance to the matter, put you in possession of the facts. Your report thereon is awaited with interest."

THE GOVERNMENT'S GOOD OFFICES INVOKED.

At the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Colonization Society, January 21, 1880, a committee of three was appointed, on the recommendation of the standing Committee on Foreign Relations, "to wait on the Secretary of State and inform him in relation to the matters in dispute between the Governments of Great Britain and Liberia with respect to the Northwest Boundary of the Liberian Republic."

The special committee, of which Hon. John H. B. Latrobe, President of the Society, was appointed chairman, in an interview with Hon. William M. Evarts, Secretary of State, April 20, 1880, presented a written paper, giving the circumstances attending the recent arbitration formulated by the British Government for the adjustment of the boundary between the territory of Sierra Leone and Liberia, and its failure, and suggesting that the United States Government may still have it in its power to promote the settlement of the controversy by having the arbitration carried out according to its tenor.

DISPATCH TO LONDON.

Two years later England, apparently abandoning the peaceful adjustment of the Boundary Question in the man-

ner usually pursued among independent nations, the Committee again sought the kindly intervention of the Government of the United States. This was not withheld by the present able and judicious Secretary of State, Hon. F. T. Frelinghuysen; and an elaborate dispatch was sent to London, bearing date September 15, 1882, in which it is declared that:

"While perfectly unbiased as to the merits of the points in controversy, the President and Government of the United States cannot but feel a deep sympathy for the Republic of Liberia, due as much to the early relationship between them as to the weakness of a Commonwealth struggling to maintain constitutional principles in a strange and barbarous continent. Established, in the first instance, at the suggestion of philanthropic men, and aided by the resources which President Monroe's interpretation of the statute suppressing the slave trade enabled him to afford, in 1821, when the Elizabeth sailed with the first company of emigrant colonists, Liberia has grown to be a Nation, recognized by all the world as one of the family of nations, owing a large part of its population to the United States, and offering, as it does, a home and brighter future to many thousands of necessitous Americans who are now awaiting the means of removal thither under the auspices of the benevolent Society which has so much aided their unfortunate brethren in the past. Liberia must always be more closely allied in feeling to the United States than to any other country, and to the United States it naturally appeals on an occasion like the present.

"And while the United States would, in all fairness and impartiality, be the first to recognize the right of others to the territory in dispute between Liberia and the Native Chiefs, if the alleged cessions be found invalid; yet, if her claims thereto prove to be just, the United States could not be indifferent to the curtailment of Liberia's line of sea coast through such an enforced sale as would seem from what has already been said to be inconvenient, and would view with *positive disfavor* the compulsory alienation of territory already acknowledged by her Majesty's Government to be the rightful property of Liberia without a considerate opportunity being offered to that Republic to make

good in other ways, according to its ability and resources, whatever money claim may be conclusively adjudged to be due to British claimants."

THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY "ANNEXED" BY ENGLAND.

The well known and intimate relations and friendship existing between the Governments of the United States and Liberia, and the kindly offices of the former to avert the threatened loss of territory by the latter, have proved of no avail. The right of Liberia to the West African coast from Cape Mount to the Shebar river, acquired by fair and open purchase, and maintained through an earnest and protracted struggle, has been made to give way to the might of England—the weakest Power on the globe is compelled to yield to the strongest! The following letter from a leading resident of Monrovia, dated March 30, 1883, contains mention of the official notification of the transaction:

"By the mail on the morning of the 28th inst. the Government received a communication from the Governor of Sierra Leone announcing that Her Majesty's Government has formally taken possession of all our territory north of the Mannah river, and they have issued a formal proclamation of the same. They also demand payment of the forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) which Governor Havelock decided last March we were indebted for the so-called Mannah country claims. And as an offset to that demand they say they would allow us the amount (\$4,075.12) which appears in one of their Blue Books as having been paid by us for those territories which they have taken. Thus by one stroke of the Lion's paw has been torn from us all that territory, including the famous Gallinas slave-trading region, for the purchase of which the friends of freedom in America and in England contributed so largely. The Governor proposes, if we are willing, to enter into a treaty with us recognizing our right of territory from the Mannah river southward, and to form regulations as to the boundary."

THE PROCLAMATION.

England takes the territory so long in dispute, and which covers a line of sea coast of some forty miles, by cession direct of the so-called King of the Gallinas and Chiefs of the neighboring country, in an "agreement" concluded at Solymah, March 30, 1882, with Governor Havelock, which agreement was not ratified for nearly a year, as appears by the Governor's Proclamation of March 19, 1883, conveying "Her Majesty's confirmation and acceptance."

The region "annexed" is described as bordering on the Atlantic Ocean and extending a "distance inland of half a mile from high water," and intended "as part of the colony of Sierra Leone." The consideration is an annual stipend of £210, distributed among fifteen Native Princes and Headmen in sums of from £5 to £30, payment to begin at once.

A distinguished Liberian writes: "The line is so run that although the territory is only half a mile in depth, it cuts off all the remaining territory from all the waterways for twenty miles from the sea, so that owners of territory a hundred miles in depth cannot have excess to the sea or rivers, although they may be within half a mile of either. This is done to force a cession of the remaining territory."

POPULATION AND MONEY NEEDED.

The Republic of Liberia, though the unquestioned owner of some five hundred miles of coast territory, with an extension inland indefinitely, is poor, and needs larger numbers and to have its industry and resources developed; and, surrounded as it is by heathen tribes, it has to look mainly, as in the past, for encouragement and aid from the Government and people of the United States.

So far from the work of the American Colonization Society having ceased or passed by, it never made a stronger

appeal to patriots, Christians, or friends of human freedom or progress than it does at this time. Its field was never so wide and its promise of success was never so encouraging if the means are supplied by which the agencies now in successful operation can be kept in vigorous action.

